

USING SHORT STORY STRATEGY TO DEVELOP READING COMPREHENSION OF GRADE EIGHT STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

This research aims at proving if the application of the short story can develop the students' reading comprehension. The sample of this research was grade eight students of SMP Negeri 3 Palu particularly class D and class E, namely class E as the experimental group and class D as the control group. The treatment was given to the experimental group using the short story, while the control group was not. To collect the data, the researcher used test instrument (pre-test and post-test). The finding confirmed that the mean scores of pre-test in both groups were different. The control group had a higher score which was 57.19 while the experimental group was 44.69. This result showed that the students in the experimental group had problems in reading comprehension which needed to improve. However, after treatment, the result of the two groups showed significant distinction. The mean score of the experimental group rose to 71.80 while the control group was 64.45. Moreover, to prove the hypothesis, the process of calculating the result was continued by comparing the t-counted and t-table by applying the level of significance (df) at 62 (32+32-2). The result showed that the value of the t-counted was 8.70 which was higher than the t-table (1.670). It means that the hypothesis of the research was accepted. In conclusion, using short story can develop the students reading comprehension.

Keywords: Develop, Reading Skill, Short Story

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk membuktikan apakah penggunaan cerita pendek dapat meningkatkan kemampuan reading pada siswa kelas delapan D dan E di SMP Negeri 3 Palu. Peneliti menerapkan desain penelitian kuasi eksperimental yang melibatkan kelompok eksperimen dan kontrol. Sampel penelitian ini adalah kelas VIII E sebagai kelompok eksperimen dan kelas VIII D sebagai kelompok kontrol. Keduanya dipilih menggunakan teknik sample acak. Dalam pengumpulan data, peneliti memberikan prates dan pascates untuk kedua kelompok. Hasil dari analisis data menunjukkan bahwa terdapat perbedaan yang signifikan antara hasil prates dan pascates. Nilai rata-rata kelompok eksperimen sebelum perlakuan adalah 44.69 sementara nilai kelompok kontrol adalah 57.19. Setelah perlakuan, nilai rata-rata kelompok eksperimen adalah 71.80 dan nilai kelompok kontrol adalah 64.45. Hal tersebut juga menunjukkan bahwa nilai hitung t (8.70) lebih tinggi dibandingkan nilai tabel t (1.670) yang mengindikasikan bahwa hipotesis penelitian diterima. Dengan demikian, penggunaan cerita pendek dapat meningkatkan kemampuan membaca pada siswa SMP Negeri 3 Palu.

Kata Kunci: Mengembangkan Kemampuan Membaca, Cerita Pendek

INTRODUCTION

Reading comprehension is defined as the language learners ability to understand and comprehend a written text to find the main idea and specific information. During the reading process, the good readers are the people who use their prior knowledge to understand, compare, and integrate with the

given texts (Duke & Pearson, 2009). It means that reading comprehension is a way to understand the text which involves the readers' ability to make a relationship between their background knowledge and their purpose of reading with the meanings of the text.

Reading comprehension is a multicomponent, highly complex process that involves many interactions between readers and what they bring to the text (previous knowledge, strategy use) as well as variables

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related to the text itself (interest in text and understanding of text types). Aloqaili (2012) states that representation and arrangement of the knowledge in the text are two factors that influence students' comprehension to improve the reading skill. Finally, its process results from a meaning of the text which is being understood by the readers.

Narrative text is one of the genres taught for the eighth and ninth grade students at Junior High School. Rebbeca (2003) defines that narrative text is a text which relates a series of logically and chronologically related events that are caused or experienced by factors. Duke & Pearson (2009) state that a key to comprehending a narrative is a sense of plot (the theme, characters, events, and how they related). The narrative text has character, setting and action. The characters are usually introduced in the beginning. The problem reaches its high point in the middle. The ending resolves the problem.

The narrative is a text that tells a story and, in doing so, entertains the audience. Also, The narrative often contains large passage arranging the events in a story strictly in chronological order which the purpose is mainly to inform the reader. The narrative can be imaginary or factual (fairy tales, mysteries, fables, romances and adventure stories, myths and legends). Shabirin (2012) describes many different types of narrative; namely humour, romance, crime, real-life fiction, historical fiction, mystery, fantasy, science fiction, diary novel, and adventure.

Using short story has advantages in creating the students' interpretations and analysis by involving their views, experiences and feelings (Khatib, 2011). The use of a short story in English teaching should be aimed to encourage the students to use what they have previously learnt. By doing this, the learning process is student-centred. According to Coleman & Primentel (2012), a short story can assist EFL learners to enable them with a broad range of reading levels.

In using the short story to teach English, story selection is indeed one of the most critical roles of the teacher. Choosing a short story is enough to handle within course hours since the lengths of short-stories are quite vary. As supported by Pardede (2011), the teachers have the responsibility to provide the short-story text is readability from the content and the length. The shortness of the

text is essential for the students because they will see that they can read, understand, and finish it in English, and it will give the students a feeling of achievement and self-confidence. Moreover, reading a short story permits the students to read the entire story. They have a moment to understand the sequence and the meaning of the context and get the authors' message across (Boyles, 2012). First and foremost, short story stimulates students with high order thinking to analyze and create the story. Therefore, the students become active learners in developing their knowledge as well as good comprehension in doing exercises.

The researcher uses the short story as one of the strategies in developing students' understanding in reading. In the teaching process, the researcher restricts the kind of reading passage with the folk tale. Therefore, the passages that are given to the students are the familiar story. It is expected to minimize the complex difficulties that commonly are faced by the students, such as not getting the content of the text, getting confused with the type of story, and getting bored because of unfamiliar themes. Besides, the students may get benefits to improve their vocabulary by reading some passages with varying contents and cultures.

The advantages of short story in the classroom as follows:

1. Short story enhances students reading comprehension.
2. Short story can improve students' stores of vocabulary.
3. Short story is more entertaining for students, and makes the students more familiar with critical thinking.
4. Using short story in teaching produces positive outcomes on reading, motivates students, and makes the teaching more interesting.
5. The variety of themes will offer different things to many individuals' interests and tastes.
6. Short story gives the learners a better view of other cultures and people.

The researcher assumes that providing short story and combining it through the students' comprehension may give a significant difference between the groups. The research question of this research: can using short story strategy develop reading comprehension of grade eight students of SMP Negeri 3 Palu? In this research, the researcher focused on reading skill in comprehending stories. The material for teaching-learning process focused on narrative text especially fiction genre. The type of fiction story was folk tales. During the treatment, the researcher did some activities related to the passage. The activities related to the ice-breaking, asking some questions, doing some exercises, reading aloud, and having group discussion. The aims of this research to assess whether or not using short story strategy can develop reading comprehension of grade eight students.

RESEARCH METHOD

In this research, the researcher applied quasi-experimental design, specifically non-equivalent control group design. It meant that there were experimental group and control one. Both groups were given pre-test and post-test, and the experimental group received the treatment.

The population is a group consisting of all people to whom a researcher wishes to apply the findings of a study (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). Based on the statement above, the researcher chose grade eight of SMP Negeri 3 Palu as the population of the research. There were 12 classes, and the total number of the population is 406 students. The samples of this research were class VIII E as the experimental group and class VIII D as the control group. The dependent variable in this research was reading comprehension of the grade eight students at SMP Negeri 3 Palu, and the independent variable was the short story strategy.

To collect the data, tests were used. Tests are expected to measure the student's result in reading skill before and after the treatment and to find out if the technique can develop the students' reading skill. In this study, two kinds of test were applied. The test was given to the students twice, before treatment (pre-test) and after treatment (post-test). Pre-test is used to measure students' reading skill before treatment while post-test is used to find out whether the use of short

story can develop students' reading skill or not.

To measure the students' score, the researcher used the scoring system which is adopted from 2013 Curriculum Kemendikbud:

Table 1 Reading Scoring System

No	Types of the Test	No. of Item	Score of each item	Total score
1	Reading Comprehension Question	5	4	20
2	Multiple choice	20	1	20
Total				40

Table 2 Scoring Criteria

No	Criteria	Score	Category	Qualification
1	Correct content, Grammar	4	Very good	Successful
2	Correct content, Incorrect grammar	3	Good	Successful
3	Correct grammar, Incorrect content	2	Fair	Successful
4	Incorrect content and grammar	1	Poor	Failed
5	No answer	0	Very poor	Failed

FINDINGS

After conducting the pre-test to the two groups, the researcher provided the treatment. The treatment was given to the experimental group, but both experimental and control groups received the tests which had similar content. In the first meeting, the students from both groups were given the pre-test. Then, in the eighth meeting, both groups were

conducted the post-test. In the experimental group, the researcher did the treatment by applying the short story strategy for six meetings. The themes of short story were various. The researcher chose to combine between the local story and the story from abroad to trigger students' interest and motivation. In addition, it was an entertainment to the readers to enjoy their reading and to learn the culture as the advantages of short story. Each meeting spent 80 minutes. The result of the pre-test and post-test of experimental group is presented on table 3.

Table 3 The Result of the Pre-test and Post-test of Experimental Group

No	Initials	Individual Score	
		Pre-test (x ₁)	Post-test (x ₂)
1	AI	30.0	80.0
2	AD	32.5	82.5
3	ACO	32.5	70.0
4	AA	32.5	62.5
5	AY	52.5	65.0
6	AW	47.5	75.0
7	ADP	65.0	77.5
8	DSF	32.5	77.5
9	EY	47.5	70.0
10	FHY	35.0	55.0
11	FR	52.5	75.0
12	FRI	37.5	75.0
13	IGC	52.5	80.0
14	JFH	55.0	75.0
15	LFA	40.0	77.5
16	MAS	35.0	72.5
17	MF	57.5	82.5
18	MR	37.5	87.5
19	MAK	40.0	62.5
20	MA	57.5	65.0
21	MDY	42.5	70.0
22	NN	52.5	75.0
23	NAY	42.5	77.5
24	NK	42.5	65.0
25	PAA	45.0	47.5
26	RAF	55.0	70.0
27	SS	47.5	72.5
28	SA	50.0	65.0
29	SAD	45.0	75.0
30	SR	42.5	67.5
31	TSL	47.5	70.0
32	YL	47.5	75.0
Total		1.433	2.298
MeanScore		44.69	71.80

After counting the pre-test score of the experimental group, the researcher finds that the mean score of pre-test of experimental

group is 44.69. The highest score is 65 and the lowest score is 30. The highest score of the post-test of experimental group is 87.5 and the lowest score is 47.5. Furthermore, the mean score of the post-test of experimental group is 71.80. It means that the improvement of the result of the experimental group is 27.11. It is increased from 44.69 to 71.80.

The result of the pre-test and post-test of control group is presented on table 4.

Table 4 The Result of Pre-test and Post-test of Control Group

No	Name	Individual Score	
		Pre-test (x ₁)	Post-test (x ₂)
1	APR	40.0	60.0
2	AAC	57.5	62.5
3	AJA	47.5	67.5
4	AO	57.5	62.5
5	AF	60.0	72.5
6	AS	47.5	50.0
7	AP	65.0	67.5
8	DSP	55.0	67.5
9	ES	47.5	55.0
10	FMZ	70.0	72.5
11	FR	57.5	62.5
12	FRD	47.5	57.5
13	IFS	57.5	65.0
14	IS	60.0	65.0
15	LF	70.0	75.0
16	MA	72.5	75.0
17	MF	67.5	72.5
18	MR	47.5	62.5
19	MS	60.0	65.0
20	MRS	67.5	72.5
21	MW	42.5	52.5
22	MN	52.5	67.5
23	NMD	50.0	55.0
24	NHS	52.5	60.0
25	NH	55.0	67.5
26	RA	65.0	67.5
27	RAD	50.0	55.0
28	SD	47.5	52.5
29	SAD	60.0	67.5
30	SR	67.5	67.5
31	TY	57.5	62.5
32	YSQ	75.0	77.5
Total		1.830	2.062.5
Mean Score		57.19	64.53

In calculating the students' individual score of the control group, the researcher employed the same formula used in experimental group. As a result, the researcher finds that the mean score of pre-test of control group is 57.19. The highest score is 75 and the

lowest score is 42.5. The highest score of the post-test of control group is 77.5 and the lowest score is 52.5. Furthermore, the researcher finds that the mean score of post-test of control group is 64.45. There is also an improvement of the result of the control group. The improvement of the control group is 7.26. It rises up from 57.19 to 64.45.

To find the total deviation, the total score in post-test is deducted by the total score in pre-test after that the total deviation is squared to get the square deviation. Based on the calculation, it was found that the total deviation score of the experimental group is 867.5 and the square deviation score of experimental group is 27.856.25. On the other hand, the total deviation score and the square deviation score of control group are 232.5 and 2.488.25 respectively.

The total deviation is divided into the number of students in each group in order to find the mean deviation score for both experimental and control groups. The mean deviation of the experimental group is 27.11 and the mean deviation of the control group is 7.27 while the sum of square deviation score of the experimental group is 4.338.87, and the sum of square deviation score of the control group is 791.99. After the computation of the significance between the experimental and control groups by using formula from Arikunto (2006), the result of the data analysis shows that the t_{counted} is 8.70. For the t -table value, the researcher applied interpolation formula because the degree of freedom (df) of the table is $N_x + N_y - 2 = 32 + 32 - 2 = 62$ with the level significance 0.05. Based on the data, the researcher concludes that the research hypothesis is totally accepted. In other words, the use of short story can develop students reading comprehension.

DISCUSSION

The main focus on this study was the students' improvement in reading the narrative text by using the short story as the strategy. The teaching and learning process style was student-centered, so the students did the whole learning activities in the classroom, while teacher was the facilitator in the classroom. The researcher previously did the observation to the school by interviewing one of the English teachers. The information from the teacher became the primary issue to conduct

the research. In her research, the researcher conducted two kinds of exercises; multiple choice and essay, in order to know their prior knowledge in the pre-test and to identify their improvement after the treatment by giving the post-test.

The two classes had been selected from 12 classes of the eighth grade by using purposive sampling. Each class consisted of 32 students. They were named as experimental group and control group. After calculating the data from pre-test, the researcher did the treatment which focused on reading skill by using one of the narrative text as the strategy, the short story. During the treatment, the researcher provided a different short story in every meeting and did various activities individual students and groups to identify the generic structure and elements of the narrative text. The passage encouraged students' interest because they felt familiar when they read the title of the stories. However, they found difficulties because the stories presented in English. Therefore, one of the activities in the classroom was asking the students to underline the unfamiliar vocabulary. Then, the meanings were given in the discussion section. It was useful to lead them understood the setting, the plot, and the characters in the story. It also built their confidence to explain the content of the story in English because of the stories of the vocabulary that they received during the treatment.

Based on the data, applying the short story as the strategy is effective to improve the students' reading skill in the narrative text. This research has the same conclusion as the two previous studies from Setyani (2009) and Jessica (2017). Short story is a good technique to develop students' comprehension in reading. Therefore, the researcher defines three reasons to support this successful research. Firstly, the students' interest in the themes of the short story because the researcher provided familiar themes to attract students' attention and to trigger the students' motivation in reading the English version. Alptekin & Erçetin (2011) describe the students build their comprehension when they have the connection through the reading passage in the stated idea, inferences and conclusion, and emotional reaction. Furthermore, Aloqaili (2012) states that representation and arrangement of the knowledge in the text are two factors that

influence students' comprehension to improve the reading skill. Secondly, the length of the short story is efficient to read in one session. The researcher selected the story which is adaptive and adaptable regarding the word count. It is in line with Pardede (2010) who states the responsibility of the teachers to provide the short story texts which have readability from the content and the length. The last, the short story is an effective strategy to motivate students in reading because of the various contents, vocabulary, and grammar. These elements assist the students to broaden their knowledge in English. Coleman & Primentel (2012) state a short story supports English Foreign Language learners to provide them with a broad range of reading levels. Furthermore, creating students' critical thinking is important for their future because students need to interpret what they read to get the meaning and the idea. Khatib (2011) states the application of the short story has advantages in creating the students' interpretations and analysis by involving their views, experiences, and feelings.

However, this study finds some unexpected things from the process of collecting data. The schedule of the research delayed because of the disaster. It affected the process of treatment to pause over a month. Furthermore, it gives a disadvantage for some students because of their absenteeism during the treatment. Then, the unclear information related to the K13 practice and scoring system from the teachers. Therefore, the researcher assumes that the teachers have limitation in comprehension the content and the application of K13 during the learning process.

From the explanations above, it can be concluded that there are three main factors which contribute to improve students' reading comprehension. They are interesting themes, the length of the short story, and the using of the short story during the treatment. Therefore, this research can be one of the recommendation researches for English teaching and learning process in the future.

CONCLUSION

By Applying short story technique, it encourages students to increase their reading habits of the English text. Furthermore, they are familiar with the various vocabulary and themes. These help them to be quietly

confident about their English progress. In other words, reading short story is one of the effective techniques in teaching reading for the students.

The result clarifies that the value of the t-counted is 8.70 which is higher than t-table (1.670). It means that using short story strategy can develop reading comprehension of grade eight students of SMP Negeri 3 Palu. It is concluded that using short story is effective.

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